COMMON MARKET ORGANISATION REGULATION REVISION

Key points for consumers

BEUC The European Consumer Organisation

The Consumer Voice in Europe

Why it matters to consumers

Consumers need clear rules on the marketing of agricultural products, from their production to their labelling or their price to make informed choices. To this end, the European Commission's proposal to amend the Common Market Organisation (CMO) Regulation targets several elements of the agri-food chain to create a fairer, more resilient agri-food market, which is encouraging. However, this revision must also ensure that consumer health and interests remain central to policy design and implementation. Here are BEUC's key recommendations in areas affecting consumers the most.

The table assesses the proposals with the following symbols, illustrating:

 what BEUC supports

 what can be improved

 what BEUC does not support

TOPICS	RECOMMENDATIONS
USE THE EU SCHOOL SCHEME TO SUPPORT HEALTHIER DIETS The EU School Scheme supports the distribution of fruit, vegetables, milk and certain milk products to schoolchildren, from nursery to secondary school.	The CMO revision rightly focuses on improving nutrition by limiting products high in free sugars and fats and excluding ultra processed foods that do not meet children's nutritional needs. Expanding nutrition education and awareness-raising activities as an integral part of the scheme is good news. Encouraging children to understand healthy plant-rich diets, local food systems, and sustainability is essential. To make the scheme effective and equitable, Member States should strictly apply and consistently enforce the WHO guidelines on nutritional thresholds for a healthy diet. For this to occur, funding should prioritise fresh, minimally processed fruit, vegetables, wholegrains and legumes, while no public money should be directed to unhealthy foods.
LEAVE THE "VEGGIE-BURGER BAN" DEBATE BEHIND The proposal introduces new provisions protecting certain meat-related terms, justified as measures to "enhance transparency" and help consumers make informed choices.	The debate on meat denominations has consumed disproportionate attention while providing little added value for consumers. According to BEUC's 2020 survey, almost 70% of consumers agree with terms like veggie burger or soy sausage. 42% of consumers say these names should be permitted provided that the products are clearly labelled as vegetarian/vegan, and 1 in 4 (26.2%) do not see any problem at all with using such names. Another 11% have no opinion. In addition, the European Court of Justice ruled in 2024 that the current Food Information to Consumers (FIC) Regulation is sufficient to protect consumers from confusion and inform them. The focus should be on closing a real information gap: no food packaging should mislead consumers, be it through illustrations, package design, or text, including health and nutritional claims.

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MAINTAIN TRANSPARENCY IN MARKETING STANDARDS AND ORIGIN LABELLING Information on where and how their food is produced is a top priority for many consumers.	Well-designed origin labelling strengthens consumer trust, supports local production, and contributes to more transparent supply chains. Rules already cover products such as fresh meat, honey, fruits and vegetables, and olive oil. The proposal extends the sectors covered by marketing standards to cheese, protein crops, and certain meat categories. This means that it would, at a later stage, allow the Commission to adopt harmonised origin-labelling requirements for these products. The Commission should seize this opportunity to reflect a strong consumer demand for clearer origin information on both processed and unprocessed foods. To make sure all consumers benefit from the same strong protection, the EU needs fully harmonised origin labelling rules. Origin information must remain clear, accessible, and visible on the physical label. In a context where simplification ranks high on the political agenda, all labelling duties of food had better lie with the FIC, improving market surveillance, enforcement and ensuring equal penalties in case of violations.
Keep consumers involved: **AFFORDABILITY, TRANSPARENCY AND FAIRNESS**	Beyond individual provisions, the CMO revision must explicitly integrate consumer perspectives into market policy. The proposal's objective to strengthen farmers' positions in the supply chain is legitimate and necessary. Yet, policy changes must ensure healthy food remains affordable and accessible for consumers, especially vulnerable ones. The new rules should integrate a consumer-impact monitoring system to assess how the proposed crisis-management tools affect consumer prices and product availability. It should build on existing national price observatories and ensure EU-level coordination and comparability, to identify how these measures would ultimately impact consumers. The use of such tools for perishable products should avoid unintended effects, including food waste, that may lead to higher prices or reduced choice. To make this oversight effective, the EU Commission should formally involve consumer organisations in such a monitoring system as well as in the implementation of the Regulation. Consumer organisations could provide evidence on consumer-price developments and product availability and offer structured input to crisis-management measures. This would ensure that consumer interests are considered in the process alongside those of producers and traders.

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